MILES WALLINGFORD

By James FENIMORE COOPER

CHAPTER VI

"Like the lily
That once was mistress of the field, and
flourished
I'll hang my head and perish."

I saw little of Lucy that night. She I saw little of Lucy that night. She met us at evening prayers, and tears were in her eyes, as she arose from her knees. Without speaking, she kissed her father for good night, more affectionately than ever, I thought, and then turned to me. Her hand was extended (we had seldom met or parted for eighteen years without observing the little act of kindness), but she did not—nay, could not, speak. I pressed this little hand fervently in my own, and relinquished it again, in the same eloquent silence. She was seen no more by us until next day.

The breakfast had ever been a happy meal at Clawbonny. My father, though merely a shipmaster, was one of the better class; and he had imbibed many better class; and he had imbibed many notions, in the course of his different voyages, that placed him much in advance of the ordinary habits of his day and country. Then an American shipmaster is usually superior to those of other countries. This arises from some of the peculiarities of our institutions, as wall as from the circumstance that upon the venerable American custom of swallowing a meal as soon as out of bed. The breakfast at Clawbonny, from my earliest infancy, or as long as I can remember, had been eaten regularly at 9 o'clock, happy medium between the laziness of dissipation and the hurry of ill-formed habits. At that hour the whole family used to meet, still fresh from a night's repose, and yet enlivened and gay by an hour or two of exercise in the open air, instead of coming to the family board half asleep, with a sort of drowsy sulkiness, as if the meal were a duty, and not a pleasure. We ate as leisurely as keen appetites would persist the meal was a sulcious of the same and the s duty, and not a pressure. We are as leisurely as keen appetites would permit; laughed, chatted, related the events of the morning, conversed on our plans for the day, and indulged our several tastes and humors, like people who had been up and stirring, and not like as a several description. breakfast has been celebrated by several modern writers, and it deserves to be, though certainly not be compared to that of France. Still, it might be far better than it is, did our people understand the mood in which it ought to be enjoyed.

While on this subject, the reader will excuse an old man's prolixity, if I say a word on the state of the selence of the table in general, as it is put in practice in this great republic. A writer of this country, one Mr. Cooper, has somewhere said that the Americans are the grossest feeders in the civilized world, While on this subject, the reader will and warns his countrymen to remember that a national character may be formed in the kitchen. This remark is commenin the kitchen. This remark is commen-ted on by Captain Marryatt, who calls it both unjust and ill-natured. As for the ill-nature I shall say nothing, unless it be to remark that I do not well see how that which is undeniably true ought to be thought so very ill-natured. That it is true every Amplican who had seen tain Marryatt's allegation that the tables are good in large towns, has noth-ing to do with the merits of this quesing to do with the merits of this ques-tion. The larger American towns are among the best eating and drinking portions of the world. But what are they as compared to the whole country? What are the public tables, or the tables of the refined, as compared to the n understand what good cookery is, it by no means follows that all do. Who would think of saying that the people of England live on white bait the people of England live on white-batt and venison, because the nobllity and gentry (the aldermen inclusive) can enjoy both in the seasons ad libitum? I suspect this Mr. Cooper knows quite as well what he is about, when writing of America, as any European. If pork fried in grease, and grease pervading half the other dishes, vegetables cooked without any art, and meats done to rags, make a good table, then is this Mr. Cooper wrong, and Captain Marryatt right, and vice versa. And yet while nature has done but little. Much compared with numbers and time, certainly, but once a such a truth for nourselves or such in America, art has done but little. Much compared with numbers and time, certainly, but once a such a truth for nourselves or such as a such control of the leading plantully accurate on all the leading to compare to recall a point of which I took no heed at the moment. Such things only as made an impression is it in my power to relate.

When Grace gently, and I might add faintly, raised herself from my bosom, rather than her own.

"Brother," she said earnestly, "the will of God must be submitted to; I am very, very ill,—broken in pieces,—I grow weaker every hour. It is not right to once a such at truth from ourselves. with numbers and time, certainly, but little as compared with what numbers and time have done elsewhere. Never-theless, I would make an exception in favor of America as respects the table of one country, though not so much in or one country, though not so much in connection with the coarseness of the feeding as in the poverty of the food. I consider the higher parts of Germany to be the portions of the Christian world where eating and drinking are in the where eating and drinking are in the most primitive condition; and that part of this great republic, which Mr. Alison would probably call the state of New England, to come next. In abundance and excellence of food in the native form, America is particularly favored; Baltimore being at the very necleus of all that is exquisite in the great business of mastication. Nevertheless, the substitution of cooks from the interior of New England, for the present glistenof New England, for the present glisten-ing tenants of her kitchens would turn even that paradise of the epicure into a sort of oleaginous waste. Enough of

Lucy did not appear at prayers next morning. I felt her absence as one feels the certainty of some dreadful evil. Breakfast was announced; still Lucy did not appear. The table was smoking and hissing; and Romeo Clawbonny, who acted as the every-day house-ser-vant, or footman, had several times intimated that it might be well to comp operations, as a cold breakfast was very

cold comfort.

"Miles, my dear boy," observed Mr.
Hardinge after opening the door to look
for the absentee half a dozen times, "we
will wait no longer. My daughter, no
doubt, intends to breakfast with Grace,
to keep, the proof dear gill company to keep the poor dear girl company; for it is dull work to breakfast by one's self. You and I miss Lucy sadly, at this very moment, though we have each other's company to console us."

"Good morning, dearest father," said the sweet girl, passing an arm round Mr. Hardinge's neck, with more than her usual tenderness of manner, and im-printing a long kies on his bald head. "Good morning, Miles," stretching to-ward me a hand, but averting her face, as if afraid it might reveal too much when exposed fully to my anxious and inquiring gaze. "Grace passed a pretty quiet night, and is, I think, a little less disturbed this morning than she was yesterday."

disturbed this morning than she was yesterday."

Neither of us answered or questioned the dean nurse. What a breakfast was that, compared to so many hundreds in which I had shared at that very table, and in that same room! Three of the accustomed faces were there, it is true; all the appliances were familiar, some dating as far back as the time of the first Mile; Romeo, now a gray-headed and wrinkled negro, was in his usual place; but Chloe, who was accustomed to pass often between her young mistress and a certain closet, at that meal, which never seemed to have all we wanted arranged on the table at first, was absent, as was that precious "young mistress" herself. "Gracious Providence!" I mentally ejaculated, "is it thy will it should ever thus!" Am I never seain to see those dove-like eyes turned on me in sisterly affection from the head of my table, as I have so often seen them, on hundreds and hundreds of coversions?" Lurgy's spirits. eyes turned on me in sisterly affection from the head of my table, as I have so often seen them, on hundreds and hundreds of occasions?" Lucy's spirits had sometimes caused her to laugh merrily; and her musical voice once used to mingle with Rupert's and my own more manly and deeper notes, in something like audible mirth; not that Lucy was ever boisterous or loud; but, in early girlhood, she had been gay and asimated, to a degree that often blended with the noisier clamor of us boys. With Grace, this had never happened. She seldom spoke, except in moments when the rest were still; and her laugh was rarely audible, though so often heartfelt and joyous. It may seem strange to those who have never suffered the pang of feeling that such a customary circle was broken up forever; but that morning, the first in which I keesiy felt that my sister was lost to me I actually missed her graceful, eloquent silence!

quent silence!

"Miles," said Lucy, as she rose from
the table, tears, trembling on her eyelids as she spoke, "half an hour hence
came to the family room. Grace wishes
to see you there this morning, and I She is weak, but thinks the visit will do her goed. Do not fall to be punctual, as waiting might distress her. Good morning dearest papa; when I want you, I will sent for you."

I will sent for you."

Lucy left us with these ominous notices, and I felt the necessity of going on the lawn for air. I walked my half hour out, and returned to the house in time to be punctual to the appointment. Caloe met me at the door, and led the way in silence toward the family room. Her hand was no sooner laid on the latch than Lucy appeared, beckening me to than Lucy appeared, beckoning me to enter. I found Grace reclining on that enter. I found Grace reclining on that small settee, or causeuse, on which we had held our first interview, looking pallid and uneasy, but still looking lovely and as ethereal as ever. She held out a hand affectionately, and then held out a hand affectionately, and then I saw her glance toward Lucy, as if asking to be left with me alone. As for myself, I could not speak. Taking my old place I drew my sister's head on my bosom, and sat holding it in silence for many painful minutes. In that position I could conceal the tears which forced themselves from my eyes, it exceeding all my powers to repress these evidences of human grief. As I took my place, the figure of Lucy disappeared, and the door closed.

I never knew how long a time Grace and I continued in that tender attitude. I was not in a state of mind to note such a fact, and have since striven hard to forget most that occurred in that solemn interview. After a lapse of so many years, however, I find memory painfully accurate on all the leading

"Brother," she said earnestly, "the will of God must be submitted to: I am very, very ill,—broken in pieces,—I grow weaker every hour. It is not right to conceal such a truth fro n ourselves, or from each other.

I make no reply, although she evidently paused to give me an opportunity to speak. I could not have uttered a syllable to have saved my life. The pause was impressive, rather than long.

pause was impressive, rather than long.

"I have sent for you, dearest Miles," my sister continued, "not that I think it probable I shall be called away soon or suddenly. God will spare me for a little while, I humbly trust, in order to temper the blow to those I love; but He is about to call me to Him, and we must all be prepared for it; you, and dear, dear Lucy, and my beloved guardian, as well as myself. I have not sent for you even to tell you this; for Lucy gives me reason to believe you expect the separation; but I wish to speak to you on a subject that is very near

no hesitation, therefore, in letting me know any, or all your wishes."
"Let us, then, speak of worldly things; for the last time, I trust, my brother. Slucerely do I hope that this will be the last occasion on which I shall ever be called to allude to them. This duty discharged, all that will remain to me on earth will be the love I bear my friends. This Heaven itself will excuse, as I shall strive not to let it lessen that I bear my God."
Grace paused, and I sat wondering

that I bear my God."

Grace paused, and I sat wondering what was to follow, though touched to the heart by her beautiful resignation to a fate that to most so young would seem hard to be borne.

"Miles, my brother," she continued looking at me anxiously, "we have not spoken much of your success in your last voyage, though I have understood that you have materially increased your means."

means."

"It has quite equalled my expectations; and, rich in my ship and ready money, I am content, to say nothing of Clawbonny. Do what you will with your own, therefore, my sister; not a wish of mine shall ever grudge a dollar; I would rather not be enriched by your loss. Make your bequests freely, and I

wish of mine shall ever grudge a dollar; I would rather not be enriched by your loss. Make your bequests freely, and I shall look on each and all of them as so many memorials of your affectionate heart and many virtues."

Grace's cheeks flushed, and I could see that she was extremely gratified, though still tremblingly anxious.

"You doubtless remember that by our father's will, Miles, my property becomes yours, if I die without children before I reach the age of twenty-one; while yours would have been mine under the same circumstances. As I am barely twenty, it is out of my power to make a legal will.

"It is in your power to make one that shall be equally binding, Grace. I will go this instant for pen, ink, and paper; and, as you dictate, will I write a will that shall be even more binding than one that might come within the rules of the law."

"Nay, brother, that is unnecessary; all I wish I have already said in a letter addressed to yourself; and which, should you now approve of it, will be found among my papers as a memorandum. But there should be no mis-

should you now approve of it, will be found among my papers as a memoran-dum. But there should be no mis-apprehension between you and me, deareat Miles. I do not wish you even fully to consent to my wishes now; take time to consider, and let your judgment have as much influence on your decision as your own excellent heart."

"I am as ready to decide at this moment as I shall be a year house his

"I am as ready to decide at this moment as I shall be a year hence. It is enough for me that you wish the thing done, to have it done, sister."

"Bless you, bless you, brother," said Grace, affectionately pressing my hand to her heart; "not so much that you consent to do as I wish, as for the spirit and manner in which you comply. Still, as I ask no triffe, it is proper tha: I release you from all pledges here given, and allow you time for reflection. Then, it is also proper you should know the full extent of what you promise."

"It is enough for me that it will be in my power to perform what you desire;

I could see that Grace was profoundly struck with this proof of my attachment, but her own sense of right was too just and active to suffer the matter to rest there."

"I must explain further," she added. "Mr. Hardinge has been a most faithful steward, and by means of economy during my long minority, the little cost that has attended my manner of living, and some fortunate investments that have been made of interest money, I find myself a good deal richer than I had supposed. In relinquishing my and myself a good deal richer than I had supposed. In relinquishing my property, Miles, you will relinquish rather more than two-and-twenty thous and dollars, or quite twelve hundred a year. There ought to be no misapprehensions on this subject between us, least of all at such a moment."

"I wish it were more, my sister, since it gives you pleasure to heatow it. If it

it gives you pleasure to bestow it. If it will render you any happier to perfect any of your plans, take ten thousand of my own, and and to the sum which is now yours. I would increase, rather than lessen, your means of doing good." "Miles, Miles," said Grace, dreadfully agitated, "talk not thus — it almost shakes my purpose! But no; listen now to my wishes, for I feel this will be the last time I shall ever dare to speak on the subject. In the first place, I wish you to purchase some appropriate ornsment, of the value of five hundred dellars, and present it to I have wish you to purchase some appropriate ornament, of the value of five hundred dollars, and present it to Lucy as a memorial of her friend. Give also one thousand dollars in money to Mr. Hardinge, to be distributed in charity. A letter to him on the subject, and one to Lucy, will also be found among my papers. There will still remain enough to make suitable presents to the slaves, and leave the sum of twenty thousand dollars entire and untouched."

"And what shall I do with these twenty thousand dollars, sister?" I asked, Grace hesitating to proceed.

"That sum, dearest Miles, I wish to go to Rupert. You know that he is totally without fortune, with the habits of a man of estate. The little I can leave him will not make him rich, but it may be the means of making him happy and respectable. I trust Lucy will add to it when she comes of age, and the future will be happier for them all than the past."

the past."

where searching is but I wish to speak on it at all. Promise me, dearest, to be calm, and to listed to speak on it at all. Promise me, dearest, to be calm, and to listed me, dearest, to be calm, and to listed me, dearest, to be calm and fortitude to speak on it at all. Promise me, dearest, to be calm, and to listed me, and the listed me, and to listed me, and to listed me, and to listed the me, the circumstance that I felt present the time, now thought, at least would have been on the forehead, or check, three years before, or preving on character, and has because she believe, and which least to song the first me, the lister was a lister of faith, that we were stated of pricit, and to be indignated in the same tenderness of the woman endurated, be a moment of pure felicity. But we will not talk of this now. You may least the foot; yet bequeathing with which and served, smalling as flectionately in my face.

Where the reader can better imagine that the side of were the sat. I thought, at the time, the time and ison the ours with which nature has op present. As for my, left, the reader can better imagine that the sature would have been on the fort furner than the restingue, but she can describe my select, the reader can better imagine the rest form, until laid by the side of the furner than the rest form, until laid by the side of the furner than the rest form, until laids by the side of the furner than the rest form, until laid by the side of the furner My sister spoke quick, and was com-

ness, my death will render Rupert miserable; with such a marked assurance, he will be confident of possessing my pardon and my prayers. Then, both he and Emily are penniless, I fear, and their lives may be rendered blanks for the want of the little money it is in my power to bestow. At the proper time, Lucy, I feel confident, will add her part, and you, who remain behind me, can all look on my grave, and bless its humble tenant!"

"Angel!" I murmured, "this is too such! Can you suppose Rupert will

copt this money?"
Ill as I thought of Rupert Hardinge, could not bring my mind to believe he I could not bring my mind to believe he was so base as to receive money coming from such a source, and with such a motive. Grace, however, viewed the matter differently; not that she attached anything discreditable to Rupert's compliance, for her own womanly tenderness, long and deeply rooted attachment, made it appear to her eyes more as an act of compliance with her own last behest, than as the act of degrading meanness it would unquestionably

ing to him, as the request will, from my grave?" rejoined the lovely enthusiast. "He will owe it to me; he will owe it to

"He will owe it to me; he will owe it to our former affection,—for he once loved me, Miles; nay, he loved me even more than you ever did, or could, dearest—much as I know you love me."

"By heavens, Grace," I exclaimed, unable to control myself any longer, "that is a fearful mistake. Rupert Hardinge is incapable of loving anything but himself; he has never been worthy of occupying the most idle moment of a

is incapable of loving anything but himself; he has never been worthy of occupying the most idle moment of a heart true and faithful as yours."

These words escaped me under an im-pulse I found entirely impossible to control. Scarcely were they uttered, ere I deeply regretted the indiscretion. Grace looked at me imploringly, turned as pale as death, and trembled all over, as if on the verge of disaclution. I took as if on the verge of dissolution. I tool her in my arms, I implored her pardon ner in my arms, I implored her pardon, I promised to command myself in future, and I repeated the mest solemn assurances of complying with her wishes to the very letter. I am not certain I could have found it in my heart not to have recalled my promise but for the could have found it in my heart not to have recalled my promise, but for the advantage my sister obtained over me, by means of this act of weakness. There was something so exceedingly revolting to me in the whole affair, that even Grace's holy weakness failed to sanctify the act in my eyes; at least so

even Grace's holy weakness failed to sanctify the act in my eyes; at least so far as Rupert was concerned. I owe it to myself to add that not a selfish thought mingled with my reluctance, which proceeded purely from the distaste I felt to seeing Lucy's brother, and a man for whom I had once entertained a boyish regard, making himself so thoroughly an object of contempt. As I entertained serious doubts of even Rupert's sinking so low, I felt the necessity of speaking to my sister on the subject of such a contingency.

"One might hesitate about accepting your money, after all, dearest sister," I said; "and it is proper you give me directions what I am to do, in the event of Rupert's declining the gift."

"I think that is little probable, Miles," answered Grace, who lived and died under a species of hallucination on the subject of her early lover's real character; "Rupert may not have been able to command his affections, but he cannot cease to feel a sincere friendship for me; to remember our ancient confidence and intimacy. He will receive the bequest, as you would, take one from dear Lucy," added my sister, a painfullooking smile illuminating that angelic expression of countenance to which I have so often alluded; "or, as that of a sister. You would not refuse such a thing to Lucy's d'; lag request, and why sister. You would not refuse such a thing to Lucy's djing request, and why

should Rupert to mine?"
Poor Grace! Little did she see the immense difference there was in my re-lation to Lucy and that which Rupert bore to her. I could not explain this bore to her. I could not explain this difference, however, but merely asserted to her wishes, renewing, for the fourth or fifth time, my pledges of performing with fidelity all she asked at my hands. with fidelity all she asked at my hands. Grace then put into my hands an unsealed letter addressed to Rupert, which she desired me to read when alone, and which I was to have delivered with the legacy or donation of money. "Let me rest once more on your bosom, Miles," said Grace, reclining her head in my arms, quite exhausted under the reaction of the excitement she had felt while urging her request. "I feel happier at this moment, than I have been for a long time; yet my increasing weakness admonishes me it cannot last long. Miles, darling, you must remember all our sainted mother taught you in childhood, and you will not mourn over my loss. Could I leave you united to one who understood and appreciated your worth, I should die contented. But you will be left alone,

the form in which I had ever seen and loved her might be lost, came in aid of other good resolutions that the state of the family fiad quickened in my heart. I thought, however, it might be well not to let Grace lead the conversation to such subjects, after all that had just passed, repose becoming necessary to her again. I therefore proposed calling Lucy, in order that she might be carried to her own room. I say carried; for, by a remark that fell from Chloe, I had ascertained that this was the mode in which she had been brought to the place of meeting. Grace acquiesced; but while we waited for Chloe to answer the bell, she continued to converse.

"I have not exacted of you, Miles," my sister continued, "any promise to

"I have not exacted of you, Miles," my sister continued, "any promise to keep my bequest a secret from the world; your own sense of delicacy would do that; but I will make it a condition that you do not speak of it to either Mr. Hardinge or Lucy. They may possibly raise weak objections, particularly the last, who has, and ever has had, some exaggerated opinions about receiving money. Even in her days of poverty, and poor as she was, you know, notwith-standing our true love for each other, and close intimacy, I never could induce Lucy to receive a cent. Nay, so scrupulous has she been, that the little presents which friends constantly give and receive, she would decline, because she had not the means of offering them in

I remembered the gold the dear girl had forced on me, when I first went to sea, and could have kneeled at her feet and called her " blessed."
" And this did not make you love and

respect Lucy the less, my sister? But do not answer; so much conversing must distress you."
"Not at all, Miles. I speak without

"Not at all, Miles. I speak without suffering, nor does the little talking I do enfeeble me in the least. When I appear exhausted, it is from the feelings which accompany our discourse. I talk much, very much, with dear Lucy, who hears me with more patience than your-self bytches!"

I knew that this remark applied to Grace's wish to dwell on the unknown future, and did not receive it as a re proach in any other sense. As she seemed calm, however, I was willing to indulge her wish to converse with me, so long as she dwelt on subjects that did not agitate her. Speaking of her hopes of heaven had a contrary effect, and I made no further constitute.

made no further opposition.

"Lucy's hesitation to be under the obligations you mention did not lessen obligations you mention did not lessen her in your esteem?" I repeated.

"You know it could not, Miles. Lucy is a dear, good girl; and the more intimately one knows her, the more certain is one to esteem her. I have every reason to bless and pray for Lucy; still, I desire you not to make either her or her father acquainted with my bequest."

"Rupert could hardly conceal such a thing from so near and dear friends."

"Let Rupert judge of the propriety of that for himself. Kiss me, brother; do not ask to see me again to day, for I have much to arrange with Lucy; to-

have much to arrange with Lucy; to-morrow I shall expect a long visit. God bless you, my own, dear—my only brother, and ever have you in his keep-

in threading the long passage that led to the apartment which was appropriated to my own particular purposes, as an office, cabinet, or study, I met Lucy near the door of the latter. I could see she had been weeping, and she followed me into the room. into the room.
"What do you think of her, Miles?"

the dear girl asked, uttering the words in a tone so low and plaintive as to say all that she anticipated herself.

all that she anticipated herself.

"We shall lose her, Lucy; yes, 'tis
God's pleasure to call her to Himself."

Had worlds depended on the effort, I
could not have got out another syllable.

The feelings which had been so long
pent up in Grace's presence broke out,
and I am not ashamed to say that I wept
and solbed like an infant.

and I am not asnamed to say that I wept and sobbed like an infant. How kind, how woman - like, how affectionate did Lucy show herself at that bitter movement. She said but little, though I think I overheard her murmuring "Poor Miles!"—"Poor, dear Miles!"—"What a blow it must be to a brother!"—"God will temper this loss to him!" and other similar expressions. She took one of my hands pressions. She took one of my hands and pressed it warmly between both her own; held it there for two or three minutes; hovered round me, as the mother keeps near her slumbering infant when illness renders rest necessary; and seemed more like a spirit sympathizing with my grief than a mere observer of its violence. In reflecting on what then passed months afterward, it appeared to me that Lucy had entirely forgotten herself, her own causes of sorrow, her own feelings as respected Grace, in the you in childhood, and you will not mourn over my loss. Could I leave you united to one who understood and appreciated your worth, I should die contented. But you will be left alone, poor Miles; for a time, at least, you will mourn for me."

"Forever—long as life lasts, beloved Grace," I murmured, almost in her ear. Exhaustion kept my sister quiet for a quarter of an hour, though I felt an occasional pressure of her hands, both of which held one of mine; and I could tercourse down to the time I sailed in "Forever—long as life lasts, occ...

Grace," I murmured, almost in her ear.

Exhaustion kept my sister quiet for a quarter of an hour, though I felt an hoits had placed on her deportment and accasional pressure of her hands, both of which held one of mine; and I could bear her words asking blessings and consolation for me whispered, from time to to to the me, in heartfelt petitions to Heaver had solation for me whispered, from time to to to the me, in heartfelt petitions to Heaver had solation for me whispered, from time to to to the time, in heartfelt petitions to Heaver had solation for me whispered, from time to the time, in heartfelt petitions to Heaver had solation for me whispered, from time to the course revive. I begged her not to incur the risk of further fatigue, but she course revive. I begged her not to incur the risk of further fatigue, but she face, and solation for me, until laid by the side of my parents. Miles, do your thoughts ever fusuly covered the last. I thought, at the time, notwithstanding, that the salute would have been on the forehead, or cheek, three years before, or previously to her acquaintance with Drewsti is so precious to the believer, and which leads us to hope, if not absolutely in the salute would have been on the forehead, or cheek, three years before, or previously to her acquaintance with Drewsti is so precious to the believer, and which leads us to hope, if not absolutely on mine, and kissed the curls with which nature had so profuse the curls with which nature had

pardoned for its character. There is a strong hope within me, that my death will be sanctified to the benefit of my friends. With this view, and this view only, beloved Rupert, I wish you to remember it. In all other respects let it be forgotten. You have found it impossible to command your affections and worlds would not have tempted me to become your wife without possessing all your heart. I pray daily, almost hourly"—tears had evidently blotted this portion of the letter—"for you and Emily. Live together, and make each other happy. She is a sweet girl; has enjoyed advantages that Clawbonny could not bestow, and which will contribute to your gratification. In order that you may sometimes think of me"—poor Grace was not aware of this contradiction in her request—" Miles will send you a legacy that I leave you. Accept it as a little fortune with Emily. I wish, sincerely, it were much larger; but you will not overlook the intention, and forget the insufficiency of the sum. Small as it is, I trust it will enable you to marry at once, and Lucy's heart may be confided in for the rest.

"Farewelt, Rupert—I do not say, farewelt Emily; for I think the letter, as well as its object, had better remain a

"Farewell, Rupert—I do not say, lare-well Emily; for I think the letter, as well as its object, had better remain a secret between you and me, and my brother—but I wish your future wife all brother—but I wish your future wife all of hope, as that which attends the death-bed of your affectionate

"GRACE WALLINGFORD."

Oh! woman, woman, what are ye not, when duly protected and left to the almost divine impulses of your generous natures! What may ye not become, when rendered mercenary and envious by too close a contact with those worldly interests which are never admitted to an ascendency without destroying all your moral beauty!

TO BE CONTINUED

A WIFE'S SACRIFICE

"I will give them all the graces neces sary in their state of life."

Every one liked Mable Westbrooke, and when her engagement to Harry Foster, the only son of the Wall street banker, was announced, her friends, with three exceptions, rejoiced and considered her to be an unusually fortunate girl. The reverend Mother at St. Peter's

The reverend Mother at St. Peter's Academy wouldhave been better pleased if her favorite pupil had remained with them, for, as she often said in talking the matter over with good old Sister Ursula, whose special charge Mable had been, "the child seems so well fitted for our life in every way." But she would as invariably add: "God's ways are not ours, and no doubt He has work for Mabel to do elsewhere." Then with a sigh, the dear old soul would would go off to ber various duties and to pray more earnestly than ever for this absent more earnestly than ever for this absent lamb of her flock.

rather flock.

Father Anthony, Mabel's confessor, had his doubts too, as to the wisdom of her choice, and these were shared to some extent by Mrs. Westbrooke, who did not take very kindly to her prospective son-in-law, though she consoled herself with the thought that after all he bore the reputation of being a hardworking. (steady young man, a working, steady young man, a Catholic; too, so that there was in this case no question of a mixed marriage. But her friend, the parish priest, was

—and here Father Anthony shook his head half doubtfully, "not a very fer-vent one, I fear. However, he comes at least to Mass on Sundays and to his

Easter duty."
"When it suits him to do so," Mrs. Westbrooke owned reluctantly. "But the child's heart is his, and as he also appears very fond of her; her influ-

ence—"
"We must not trust much to that,"
the old priest broke in. "Yet," he continued, "having known the lad from his
early boyhood, I am confident his faults
are chiefly owing to his home training,
or rather to the want of it."
"You will have a talk with him,
Father?" Mrs. Westbrooke asked.
"Yes, I'll certainly speak to the

Father?" Mrs. Westbrooke asked.
"Yes, I'll certainly speak to the young fellow," Father Anthony replied,
"and if he is not a Catholic he ought to be, why he shall int have Mabel, that is all." It was easy to see the old priest meant every word he said.
The Foster family, if not always rich, had always been Catholic, and the paternal grandparents of the bridegroom-elect, renowned for their sterling Catholic principles, bequeathed this priceless inheritance of the true faith to their only son with a fair share of this world's goods as well. He being a man of marked financial ability, soon increased his fortune to such an extent that to-day his fortune to such an extent that to-day his fortune to such an extent that to-day he ranked as one of New York's richest men. But as frequently happens, with worldly prosperity came a disregard for the things of God, and both he and his wife, a Protestant cared only for the things of this world, and thought little or not at all of the world to come.

Amidst surroundings of this kind, Harry their only according to the surrounding of this kind, Harry their only according to the second of the second of

Even Mrs. Westbrooke or Father anthony had no idea of this, nor could Abbody had no idea of this, nor could they very easily have found out, for both led secluded lives in their different ways and seldom came in contact with the social set in which the Fosters moved. The marrisge had been arranged before her husband's death, for he was vary anytons his despite. before her husband's death, for he was very anxious his daughter should marry the only son and heir of his banker friend. So the widow could but hope for the best and trust her child's future to

Anthony's talk with the young man had been a satisfactory one and with this they were obliged to be content.

It was the day before the wedding, a beautiful morning in June, when all nature was to begin her new life. Yet the thought of leaving her widowed mother, if only for a time, cast a shade of sadness over the girl's otherwise happy face, and it was with an additional note of tenderness in her voice that she discussed her future plans with Mrs. Westbrooke, who sat beside her on the veranda that overlooked the beautiful Hudson and afforded a delightful view of the Catskills in the distance. Mabel did most of the talking, and she seemed to think her mother's silence meant acquiescence in all the arrangements she was making for them both.

"You will be lonely, dear mother," she said, "but we shall not be long away, and after our return you are to live with us."

Mrs. Westbrooke looked up.

"You must not think to

Mrs. Westbrooke looked up. Mrs. Westbrooke looked up.

"You must not think of me as too lonely, child, though of course I shall miss you very much, but your aunt Amy intends st ying with me here until you return and then I intend going with her to Chicago for the winter."

Mabel looked both surprised and disappointed. Nothing she could say, however, was of any use, for her mother was quite decided not to share the home of quite decided not to share the home of the young couple. She felt instinctive-ly that Harry Foster would not be grieved at her absence. Poor mother! The separation was a bitter one for her, but she would not cloud her daughter's happiness, by any word of regret, and as she laid her hand half caressingly on the girl's fair hair, she said by way of con-solation:

solation:
"We shall not be far spart, dear Mabel, and from time to time I will come to stay with you, but it is better I should keep my own home, and later on you will think I have decided wisely. Besides, your aunt is quite alone and will be glad to have me with her."

"I only hope that you will change your mind, mother," Mabel replied affectionately.

Then the gong rang for luncheon and

Then the gong rang for luncheon and the conversation ended.

The wedding was a quiet one and at-tended by a few friends of the two families, but every one noticed how proud Harry Foster appeared to be of

is fair young bride.

For a time all went on well. After their return from Europe the young couple were seen regularly at St. Ann's each Sunday for the 8 o'clock Mass, but only Father Anthony noticed that after the first few Sundays the young wife approached the Holy Table alone. By degrees Mable came to realize how little her husband really cared for these things which she held most sacred and

things which she held most sacred and of how much more value he held the world and the world sapproval.

One evening, however, this sad truth came home to her as it had never done before. A few of her husband's most intimate friends, who by the way, were the staumchest of Protestants, came to dinner, and later on when they were all assembled in the parlor the conversation turned on some of the leading pulpit orators of the metropolis.

pit orators of the metropolis.

"I suppose you have been to St. Bartholonew's to hear Dr. G—," one-society dame exclaimed. "He is a most delightful man and so elequent. You and Mrs. Foster should certainly bear him. Why not come with us next Sunday?"
"We shall be delighted," was Harry's

reply, and he was just about to say how much he and his wife should like to meet the celebrated preacher, Mabel interrupted him. It is very kind of you to think of ne

but we—I cannot go. Perhaps you do not know that we are Catholics."

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